

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BEIRUT 01921 270811Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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-----270848Z 008273 /22

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3818
INFO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 1921

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT PFOR LE IS
SUBJ: SOUTH LEBANON: VIEWS OF BECHIR GEMAYEL

1. PHALANGIST MILITARY COMMANDER BECHIR GEMAYEL AND WIFE
WERE FIRST LEBANESE GUESTS AT REOPENED YARZE RESIDENCE, FOR
LUNCH APRIL 23. POLOFF MOLINEAUX ALSO ATTENDED.

2. ON SOUTH LEBANON, BECHIR TOOK POSITION THAT THE SITUATION
WAS BEYOND THE CONTROL, OR EVEN UNDERSTANDING, OF THE PATRIOTIC
FORCES WHICH HE HEADS. HE IMPLIED THEY WERE PAWNS IN HANDS
OF ISRAELIS, WHO THEY ASSUMED WERE WORKING FOR US. HE SAID THAT
WHEN WE CAME TO HIM AND ASKED FOR CEASE-FIRE AND ISRAELIS
DID NOT GIVE THEIR PROMISED SUPPORT, HE HAD BEEN PERPLEXED.
WHAT DID WE WANT? I SAID WE WANTED QUIET IN THE SOUTH, AND WERE
GLAD TO SEE THAT SITUATION THERE HAD CALMED DOWN. HE DID NOT
AGREE AND SAID HE FELT THAT THE CHRISTIAN FORCES THERE WERE NOW
IN NO IMMEDIATE DANGER. HE DID NOT THINK, HOWEVER, ONE COULD PUT
ANY FAITH IN PALESTINIAN COMMITMENT TO A CEASE-FIRE.

3. BECHIR SAID CHRISTIAN FORCES HAD WANTED TO TAKE THE
COASTAL VILLAGE OF NAKOURA, IN ORDER TO OPEN A SUPPLY LINE
BY SEA TO JOUNIEH, BUT ISRAELIS ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS HAD
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VETOED THIS IDEA. THE CHRISTIAN FORCES IN THE SOUTH WERE
THEREFORE ISOLATED AND COULD NOT GET MEDICAL SUPPLIES OR
PAY. (HE DID NOT SAY, WHAT WE BOTH KNOW, THAT THE CHRISTIAN
FORCES IN THE SOUTH HAVE A LIFE-LINE THROUGH ISRAEL.) HE
SAID THAT ISRAELI CURRENCY WAS MUCH IN USE NOW IN THE SOUTH,
SINCE LEBANESE WORKING IN ISRAEL WERE PAID IN ISRAELI POUNDS.
HE CLAIMED ISRAELIS ARE CHEATING LEBANESE ON PRICES PAID FOR

TOBACCO--LETTING IT DRY OUT AND PAYING FOR LIGHTER WEIGHT
AS OPPOSED USUAL PRACTICE OF BUYING AT WET WEIGHT.

4. I ASKED IF ISRAELIS HAD ENCOURAGED ATTACK ON TAIBEH.
BECHIR SAID NOTHING COULD BE DONE IN AREA WITHOUT ISRAELI
APPROVAL, BUT AVOIDED SAYING WHOSE IDEA IT WAS. (DANY CHAMOUN
FOLLOWING DAY SAID OPERATION HAD BEEN UNDERTAKEN
AT REQUEST KAMAL AL-ASSAD, LORD OF TAIBEH.)

5. BECHIR PREDICTABLY FOCUSED ON SECURITY NEEDS OF MARONITE
COMMUNITY, AND OUTLINED A CONCEPT OF A REGIONALLY-BASED
ARMY, WITH A "CASERNE" OR POST IN EACH CONFESSIONAL DISTRICT
WHICH WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR LOCAL DEFENSE. BECHIR SAID
NEW ARMY COMMANDER VICTOR KHOURY HAD NAMED A NUMBER OF
COMMITTEES TO DRAW UP PLANS FOR THE FUTURE OF THE ARMY, AND
THAT THE PLANS WOULD TAKE COGNIZANCE OF THE NEED FOR REGIONAL-
IZATION. THE PHALANGE SUPPORTED KHOURY.

6. I TOOK OPPORTUNITY TO EMPHASIZE THAT WE FULLY SUPPORTED
SARKIS GOVERNMENT AND OPPOSED PARTITION, WHATEVER HE MAY
HAVE HEARD TO CONTRARY NOTWITHSTANDING. QUESTION OF FUTURE
FORMULA FOR LEBANON WAS FOR LEBANESE TO DECIDE, BUT IN OUR
VIEW SECURITY OF CHRISTIANS WOULD BEST BE ASSURED BY
PRESENCE OF STRONG CENTRAL GOVERNMENT WITH UNIFIED ARMY
UNDER ITS CONTROL.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PERSONAL OPINION, POLITICAL LEADERS, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 27-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770146-0830
Format: TEL
From: BEIRUT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770416/aaaaanev.tel
Line Count: 88
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History: Hold (001 Tobacco) added on 4/16/2009 3:39:09 PM by WASHDCMcGoldRJ, Hold (001 Tobacco) removed on 4/16/2009 3:45:06 PM by WASHDCMcGoldRJ (Litigation Hold Lifted)
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Message ID: 3661c19c-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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TAGS: PINT, PFOR, LE, IS, (GEMAYEL, BECHIR)
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